

MTC CAC Sustainability Committee Report DRAFT Advisory Council Recommendations to the Commission

Committee Members Woody Hastings (Chair), Wendy Alfsen, Paul Cohen, Richard Hedges, Xiao-Yun Lu,

The committee recognizes that the MTC already has many policies, programs and projects that help advance sustainability, whether or not they are characterized explicitly as such. Examples include efforts to improve, expand, and promote pedestrian and bicycle options, transit oriented development, the Transportation for Livable Communities program, smart growth, and efforts in general to increase public transit ridership. However, significant aspects of sustainable transportation have not been addressed adequately to date, and the following recommendations aim to begin addressing these issues.

1. Adopt a formal definition of “sustainable transportation.”

During the discussions leading up to the formation of the committee, it was noted that there does not even exist an agreed-upon definition of “sustainable transportation.” It is recommended that the MTC adopt a formal definition. This definition will appear in the MTC’s “glossary of transportation terms” on the MTC website, and will be used whenever and wherever the term is used in future MTC documents (*see separate document: DRAFT MTC Sustainable Transportation Definition*);

2. Adopt a set of “Principles of Sustainable Transportation.”

Such a set of principles can help further define what is meant by the term sustainable transportation, and can be used to help guide policy and investment decisions (*see separate document: DRAFT MTC Principles of Sustainable Transportation*). The principles may be updated/amended periodically to currently reflect the evolution of technologies and transportation systems;

3. Carry out a fuel use characterization study in the nine-county region.

Since we were not able to find any existing comprehensive reports or documents that provide an inventory or characterization of the types of fuels used for all powered modes of transportation in the nine-county region, it is recommended that the MTC carry out such a study. The study should include the following components:

- The existing fuel-use portfolio (how much a given fuel, e.g., diesel, gasoline, CNG, biofuel, grid electricity, etc, is used for transportation in the region, by percentage)
- An assessment of future fuel availability scenarios;
- An assessment of future fuel cost scenarios;
- An assessment of existing alternative fuel (non-petroleum) infrastructure

4. Direct staff to review, comment on, and offer recommendations for MTC response/s to the Hirsch Report

The Hirsch Report is a report on fossil fuel supply that was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Energy. It was first published in 2005, and still stands as the definitive report

on the situation relative to the future availability of petroleum-based fuels. To review the Hirsch Report see: http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/pdf/Oil_Peaking_NETL.pdf

5. Address the issue of “teleworking” (telecommuting, teleconferencing)

Consider what role MTC might have in encouraging teleworking (telecommuting) as a means of reducing non-essential transportation demand in a way that can increase productivity. Particular attention should be paid to the potential for offshoring that may occur if such policies are widely promoted without some kind of safeguard to keep Bay Area jobs robust.

6. Direct staff to review and comment on the report: “Investigating the Possibility of Using BART for Air Freight Movement” by Xiao Yun Lu, et al; Specifically, our committee suggests that staff provide a recommendation to the Commission as to whether MTC should support and/or participate in a shared passenger/freight pilot project.

From the Introduction of the report: “The Bay Area has one of the most congested metropolitan corridors in both California and nationwide, with very high demand for both passenger and air-freight transport. It is also a main entrance to the United States for the huge Asia market, and thus critical for the U.S. to play a leading role in the global economy. On one hand, traffic congestion in the main corridors through the Bay Area is severe and is becoming worse with the rapid increase of population and the development of the local economy, in which a substantial impact is created by truck-related activities such as the ever increasing air freight business (performed by companies such as Federal Express, UPS, and DHL). On the other hand, BART operates a regional transit system that has excess capacity during non-commute periods and during the commute on some lines in some reverse-commute direction. If the BART system were to be used by the air-freight delivery service providers, BART could probably provide reliable service to integrated air freight carriers to meet their limited-time window delivery service needs. This would lead to additional revenue generation for BART. For the traveling public as well as local, regional, and state government it would reduce truck activity, and its corresponding negative impacts on traffic, environment, safety, land use and the economy.”

7. Produce a report that highlights the MTC’s role in advancing sustainable transportation systems.

(The idea here is to recommend that MTC produce another one of their very well-produced glossy booklets - this one on “Sustainable Transportation” or “Transportation Sustainability,” or something to that effect.)